

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



MARTIN O'MALLEY
GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE
100 STATE CIRCLE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1925
410-974-3901
TOLL FREE: 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

August 4, 2011

The Honorable Edwin F. O'Brien
Archbishop of Baltimore
320 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Archbishop:

I write in response to your letter on the public issue of equality of civil marriage rights in the State of Maryland.

On this bridge we share between the secular and the sacred, you and I see very much alike on many public issues affecting the good order -- and the common good -- of the pluralistic society that is our beloved United States of America: eradicating poverty, expanding economic opportunity, promoting the dignity of work and the justice of fair wages, respecting the right of workers to organize, acknowledging the justice of a fair and progressive income tax, recognizing the dignity of every human being including, as yet, unauthorized immigrants, repealing the death penalty, reducing the incidence of infant mortality, providing a quality education for every child regardless of wealth, protecting God's natural creation for the benefit of future generations, reducing violent crime, rebuilding our cities, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, visiting the imprisoned.

I do not presume, nor would I ever presume as Governor, to question or infringe upon your freedom to define, to preach about, and to administer the Sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. But on the public issue of granting equal civil marital rights to same sex couples, you and I disagree -- as I shared with you and your colleagues at the Catholic Conference during the candidate interview of the last campaign.

As Governor, I am sworn to uphold the law without partiality or prejudice. When shortcomings in our laws bring about a result that is unjust, I have a public obligation to try to change that injustice. I have concluded that discriminating against individuals based on their sexual orientation in the context of civil marital rights is unjust. I have also concluded that treating the children of families headed by same sex couples with lesser protections under the law than the children of families headed by heterosexual parents, is also unjust. Enclosed is the statement I gave on July 22, 2011 on this matter of law.

I look forward to working with you on other issues of mutual agreement. And I respect your freedom to disagree with me as a citizen and as a religious leader without questioning your motives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Martin O'Malley".

Martin O'Malley